

Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 15 August 1991

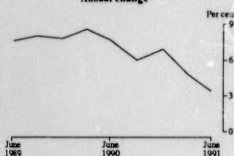
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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
Quarterly change



Annual change



CAPITAL CITY CONSUMER
PRICE INDEX
Percentage change from
previous quarter

Melbourne	0.7
Adelaide	0.6
Hobart	0.5
Darwin	0.4
Brisbane	0.0
Perth	0.0
Canberra	0.0
Sydney	-0.3
Australia	0.1

Smallest annual rise in CPI since December quarter 1984

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by a marginal 0.1 per cent in the June quarter. This result, following the slight decline in prices in the March quarter (-0.2%), delivers an effective zero change in the CPI for the first six months of calendar year 1991.

The annual increase, from June quarter 1990 to June quarter 1991, was 3.4 per cent, the lowest annual rise since the December quarter of 1984.

The low June quarter rise resulted from several offsetting influences. A large 28.3 per cent fall in the prices of fresh vegetables, combined with smaller falls for petrol (down 5.5%) and holiday travel and accommodation in Australia (down 9.4%) almost completely offset rises in some other items, including cigarettes and tobacco (up 2.7%), hospital and medical services (up 2.5%) and motor vehicles (up 2.0%).

The two groups contributing most to the annual increase in consumer prices were tobacco and alcohol and health and personal care, while the housing and food groups contributed significant offsets.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, JUNE QUARTER 1991
Weighted average of eight capital cities
Percentage change

	From previous quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
Health and personal care	1.7	10.4
Tobacco and alcohol	2.1	8.9
Clothing	1.4	4.3
Household equipment and operation	0.3	3.6
Transportation	-0.5	3.3
Recreation and education	-0.7	2.5
Food	-0.3	2.0
Housing	0.0	0.0
All groups	0.1	3.4
All groups excluding tobacco and alcohol	0.0	3.0
All groups excluding health and personal care	0.0	3.0
All groups excluding housing	0.2	4.0
All groups excluding food	0.3	3.8

For further information, order the publication Consumer Price Index (6401.0), or contact Maree Roy on (06) 252 6251.

Unemployment rises to 9.8 per cent as employment falls in July

Falls in full-time and part-time employment in July 1991 for both males and females contributed to the largest monthly fall in employment since the monthly survey began in 1978. The number of persons unemployed and the unemployment rate both increased. The participation rate fell for the third consecutive month.

Continued ...



The estimate of employed persons in July 1991 (seasonally adjusted) fell to 7,622,700. Full-time employment fell by 66,000 and part-time employment fell by 17,100. The fall of 47,900 in male employment was made up of falls of 38,200 in full-time employment and 9,700 in part-time employment. For females, employment fell by 35,200 with full-time employment falling by 27,800 and part-time employment falling by 7,400.

The seasonally adjusted estimate of unemployed persons increased by 38,900 to 831,900, almost wholly due to a rise of 38,300 in the number of persons seeking full-time work. The number of males looking for full-time work increased by 16,500 to 457,200 and the number of females looking for full-time work increased by 21,800 to 242,100. Total unemployment in July stands at 500,800 for males and 331,100 for females.

The unemployment rate in July 1991 (seasonally adjusted) was 9.8 per cent, an increase of 0.5 percentage points since June 1991. The unemployment rate for males increased by 0.5 percentage points to 10.1 per cent, while for females the rate increased by 0.6 percentage points to 9.4 per cent.

In July 1991, the seasonally adjusted estimate of the labour force participation rate fell by 0.4 percentage points to 62.6 per cent. For males the participation rate fell by 0.5 percentage points to 74.0 per cent and for females the participation rate fell by 0.3 percentage points to 51.5 per cent.

LABOUR FORCE SURVEY ESTIMATES
Seasonally adjusted

	Employed			Un- employed	Unemploy- ment	Participa- tion
	Full-time workers	Part-time workers	Total		rate	rate
	— '000 —				— per cent —	
1991 —						
March	6,007.5	1,702.6	7,710.1	777.1	9.2	63.2
April	5,996.4	1,724.6	7,721.0	844.0	9.9	63.7
May	6,001.9	1,713.1	7,715.0	803.6	9.4	63.2
June	5,985.6	1,720.2	7,705.7	793.0	9.3	63.0
July	5,919.6	1,703.1	7,622.7	831.9	9.8	62.6

For further information, order the publication *The Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary (6202.0)*, or contact Don Clark (06) 252 6525.

Imports in brief ...

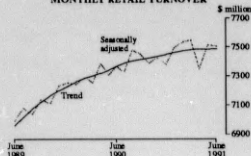
Merchandise imports for June 1991 fell by \$475 million to \$3,574 million, a decrease of 12 per cent compared with May 1991.

The main contributors to this decrease were: chemical and related products (down 15%); machinery specialised for particular industries (down 33%); miscellaneous manufactured articles (down 11%); general industrial machinery and equipment (down 25%); and electrical machinery and appliances (down 18%). A significant increase was recorded for transport equipment, up 26 per cent.

For the year ended June 1991 imports were \$48,919 million, down \$2,414 million (5%).

Source: *Foreign Trade, Australia: Merchandise Imports, June 1991 (5433.0)*.

MONTHLY RETAIL TURNOVER



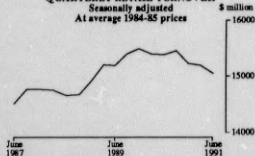
No improvement in retail trade

With the addition of June data, the trend estimates of turnover for retail and selected service establishments showed zero growth over the three months ended June 1991. The annual growth rate (June 1991 over June 1990) has dropped to a very low 1.6 per cent, an average monthly increase of just over 0.1 per cent.

The poor overall performance for the June quarter can be attributed to a number of industries being in decline, including electrical stores, department stores and clothing stores. Growth in the grocery industry has been very weak, while hotels, liquor stores and licensed clubs as well as other food stores recorded weak growth. Newsagents and pharmacies showed strong growth.

RETAIL TURNOVER

	Original value in June 1991 \$ million	Percentage change in trend estimates	
		Average monthly increase for 3 months to June 1991	June 1991 over June 1990
Pharmacies	326	3.0	15.7
Grocers, confectioners, tobacconists	2,064	0.1	6.6
Clothing and fabrics stores	522	-0.4	2.4
Other food stores	492	0.4	0.9
Newsagents	247	1.4	-1.2
Hotels, liquor stores, licensed clubs	908	0.3	-1.3
Department and general stores	739	-0.6	-2.6
Electrical stores	397	-2.1	-6.9
Other industries	1,357	n.a.	n.a.
<i>All industries</i>	<i>7,052</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>1.6</i>

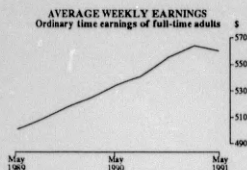
QUARTERLY RETAIL TURNOVER
Seasonally adjusted
At average 1984-85 prices

The value of retail turnover in constant price seasonally adjusted terms fell by 1.0 per cent in the June quarter over the March quarter 1991.

This was the fifth time in the last six quarters that the constant price seasonally adjusted series had fallen. In the past year (June quarter 1991 over the June quarter 1990), retail turnover had declined by 2.2 per cent.

RETAIL TURNOVER
At average 1984-85 prices, seasonally adjusted

	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From preceding quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
1990 —			
June	15,388	-0.1	1.3
September	15,458	0.5	0.4
December	15,228	-1.5	-1.7
1991 —			
March	15,197	-0.2	-1.3
June	15,046	-1.0	-2.2



Average weekly earnings decline

Preliminary estimates for May 1991 show a decrease in average weekly ordinary time earnings of 0.7 per cent for full-time adults to \$560.20, down from \$564.20 in February 1991. The decrease for males was 1.0 per cent (to \$591.70) while females' earnings remained constant at \$499.80.

The decline in ordinary time earnings is the first quarterly decline since the survey-based Average Weekly Earnings collection commenced in September 1981.

Compositional changes in the work force continue to effect the estimates but to a lesser degree than in February 1991. For full-time adults persons, average weekly total earnings decreased by 1.1 per cent (producing an annual increase of 3.8 per cent). Males contributed -1.6 per cent (3.1% annually) to this reduction while the female figures remained constant (6.0% annually).

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS, MAY 1991

	Weekly earnings (\$)			Percentage change in 'Persons' from	
	Males	Females	Persons	Feb. 91	May 90
Full-time adults					
Ordinary time	591.70	499.80	560.20	-0.7	4.9
Total	632.40	511.80	591.00	-1.1	3.8
All employees	571.30	379.80	485.10	-2.4	3.2

Average weekly earnings statistics represent average gross (before tax) earnings of employees and do not relate to average award rates nor to the earnings of the 'average person'. Estimates of average weekly earnings are derived by dividing estimates of weekly total earnings by estimates of employment. Changes in the averages may be affected not only by changes in the level of earnings of employees but also by changes in the overall composition of the labour force.

It should also be noted by those using average weekly earnings data for contractual adjustment or related purposes, that these estimates are preliminary. Final estimates for May 1991 are expected to be published on 19 September 1991 in *Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, May 1991* (6302.0).

For further information, order the publication *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, Preliminary* (6301.0), or contact Mick Atkinson on (06) 252 5946.

Paving the way for roads policy

The next comprehensive Australian Bureau of Statistics' survey of road and vehicle use will be conducted in October this year.

The three-yearly survey provides vital information for the management of Australia's land transport infrastructure. For example, it will ask private motorists how far they travelled in the 12 months to September, and seek details of the type of vehicle used, fuel consumption, the purpose for which it was used and the driving experience, age and sex of the usual driver.

Continued ...

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order (including subscription)
- ☐ by facsimile
- ☐ electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

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Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

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15 August 1991

Business owners will be asked about the main industry served, the routes travelled and the weight and type of load carried.

In the 1988 survey, it was found that Australians travelled 154,000 million kilometres by road in twelve months — that is about 9,000 kilometres for each man, woman and child in the country.

Cars and station wagons travelled an average 16,000 kilometres while at the other end of the scale, semi-trailers averaged 78,000 kilometres.

Information from the survey cannot by law be released to either private or government users in a form which could identify individual vehicle owners or their businesses.

Preliminary results from the survey are expected to be available in February 1992.

For further information, contact Michael Gurney on (06) 252 6120.

All the week's releases: 7 to 13 August

General

- Publications Issued in July 1991 (1102.0; \$5.50)
- Directory of Housing Related Statistics, 1990 (1118.0; \$30.00)
- Statistics Weekly, 8 August 1991 (1318.0; \$4.00)
- Economic Indicators, NSW, July 1991 (1307.1; \$5.00)

Demography

- Estimated Resident Population and Area, Qld, 1990 (3202.3; \$10.00)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

- Balance of Payments, Aust., 1989-90 (5303.0; \$35.00)
- Foreign Trade, Aust., Merchandise Imports, June 1991 (5433.0; \$9.00)

Labour statistics and prices

- The Labour Force, Aust., July 1991, Preliminary (6202.0; \$10.00)
- The Labour Force, Aust. — Preliminary Data on Floppy Disk, July 1991 (6271.0; \$65.00)
- Average Weekly Earnings, Aust., May 1991, Preliminary (6301.0; \$10.00)
- Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Aust., June 1991 (6312.0; \$10.00)
- Consumer Price Index, June Qtr 1991 (6401.0; \$11.00)
- Price Indexes of Materials Used in Coal Mining, Aust., June 1991 (6415.0; \$10.00)

Secondary industry and distribution

- Retail Trade, Aust., June 1991 (8501.0; \$10.00)
- Tourist Accommodation, Aust., March Qtr 1991 (8635.0; \$10.00)
- Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, NSW, April 1991 (8741.1; \$10.00)
- Tourist Accommodation, Vic., March Qtr 1991 (8635.2; \$10.00)
- Tourist Accommodation, Qld, March Qtr 1991 (8635.3; \$14.50)

Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 27 August 1991

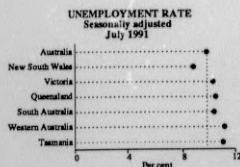
August

- 15** Australian National Accounts: National Income and Expenditure, June Quarter 1991 (5206.0; \$20.00)
Balance of Payments, Australia, June Quarter 1991 (5302.0; \$20.00)
- 22** Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, June 1991 (5609.0; \$10.00)
Export Price Index, Australia, June 1991 (6405.0; \$7.50)
- 26** Private New Capital Expenditure, Australia, Actual and Expected Expenditure to June 1992, June Quarter 1991 Survey, Preliminary (5625.0; \$10.00)
Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, June 1991 (6407.0; \$10.00)
Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, June 1991 (6408.0; \$7.50)
Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, June 1991 (6411.0; \$10.00)
- 27** Foreign Investment, Australia, June Quarter 1991, Preliminary (5307.0; \$10.00)
Company Profits, Australia, June Quarter 1991 (5651.0; \$10.00)
Manufacturing Production, Australia, July 1991, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.00)
Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, July 1991, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.00)

The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to

13 August 1991



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	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Mar. qtr 91)*	-8.4	-22.7	0	-8.9	-7.0	-16.9	n.a.	n.a.	-10.2
Retail turnover (June 91) (trend estimate)	2.0	-1.0	3.2	5.7	0.5	3.5	n.a.	9.7	1.6
New motor vehicle registrations (June 91)†	-18.0	-16.1	-14.2	-14.9	-9.9	-25.7	-22.3	4.0	-15.6
Number of dwelling unit approvals (June 91)	-7.2	-29.1	8.6	-27.1	8.8	-14.6	18.8	25.5	-8.2
Value of total building work done (Mar. qtr 91)	0.8	-30.2	-19.5	2.7	-23.2	-18.8	33.5	-4.2	-13.5
Employed persons (July 91)*	-2.9	-7.1	-1.8	-4.4	-3.4	-2.7	-2.2	0.6	-3.9
Capital city consumer price index (June qtr 91)	2.8	4.1	3.4	4.7	2.2	3.8	4.1	3.2	3.4
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (Feb. 91)	7.4	7.4	7.5	8.8	8.8	4.4	7.6	6.7	7.5
Population (Dec. 90)	1.1	1.3	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.1	1.2	2.5	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (Mar. qtr 91)	0.0	-1.9	-0.9	-6.4	-1.2	7.7	0.2	14.5	-0.5

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas, NT and ACT.

Key national indicators – consolidated to 13 August 1991

				Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
				Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
Period							
National production							
Gross domestic product	— current prices (e)	\$m	Mar. qtr 91	91,167	95,056	-0.4	1.0
	— 1984-85 prices (e)			61,295	64,415	0.1	-1.5
Industrial activity							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	Mar. qtr 91	5,736	6,463	-2.9	-11.6
	— 1984-85 prices			4,334	4,880	-3.4	-11.5
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Three months to Jun. 91	7,300	n.a.	n.a.	-10.4
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	June 91	7,052.1	7,500.9	-0.1	1.9
	— 1984-85 prices	"	June qtr 91	14,564.1	15,045.8	-1.0	-2.2
New motor vehicle registrations		no.	June 91	42,518	42,210	4.0	-15.6
Dwelling unit approvals			June 91	10,310	10,215	-9.8	-7.2
Value of all building approvals		\$m	"	1,675	1,722	-2.0	-14.5
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	Mar. qtr 91	6,021	6,653	-5.1	-12.0
	— 1984-85 prices	"		3,789	4,112	-6.9	-15.0
Manufacturers' sales	— current prices	"	Mar. qtr 91	31,937	34,424	-1.9	-4.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"		22,162	23,833	1.5	-7.0
Expected manufacturers' sales		"	Three months to June 91	34,850	n.a.	n.a.	-6.2
Labour							
Employed persons		'000	July 91	7,624.1	7,622.7	-1.1	-3.9
Unemployment rate †		%	"	9.5	9.8	0.5	2.9
Participation rate †		"	"	62.4	62.6	-0.4	-1.6
Job vacancies		'000	May 91	25.1	25.7	-13.4	-49.8
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.1	1.1	-5.9	-18.8
Prices, profits and wages							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0		June qtr 91	214.4	n.a.	0.1	3.4
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries	1984-85 = 100.0		May 91	117.8	n.a.	0.2	-0.9
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0		May 91	110.8	n.a.	0.3	1.8
Company profits before income tax		\$m	Mar. qtr 91	2,266	2,762	-29.1	-32.0
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)		\$	May 91	560.20	n.a.	-0.7	4.9
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum		June 91	10.50	n.a.	0.15	-4.60
10-year Treasury bonds †			"	11.15	n.a.	0.40	-2.25
Balance of payments							
Exports of merchandise		\$m	June 91	4,407	4,503	0.9	14.1
Imports of merchandise		"	"	3,574	3,971	3.7	2.0
Balance on merchandise trade (c)		"	"	833	532	-16.0	885.2
Balance of goods and services (c)		"	"	488	295	-23.0	n.a.
Balance on current account (c)		"	"	-720	-877	-12.0	46.6
Terms of trade (d) (e)	1984-85 = 100.0		Mar. qtr 91	n.a.	98.9	-3.3	-6.5
Foreign investment							
Net foreign debt		\$m	31 Mar. 91	133,269	n.a.	2.1	3.0
Net foreign liabilities			"	178,372	n.a.	3.4	7.4
Exchange rates (monthly average)							
US\$	per \$A		June 91	0.7604	n.a.	-0.8	-2.3
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0		"	59.2	n.a.	-0.3	-3.1
Other indicators							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million		Dec. 90	17.2	n.a.	0.4	1.5
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000		Mar. 91	189	175	-1.6	-3.3

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 15 August 1991.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6).

Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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